3: Hiscocks G-4, 5 (1946-1949) 1953 EK1 Austria EK1

Anschluss took place, Austria already had a good chance of becoming a viable State.

Politically the main achievement had been in the field of social legislation. Nowhere in Europe did the Socialist ideal find more impressive realization than in the legislative programme initiated by Ferdinand Hanusch, the Austrian Secretary of Social Administration between 1918 and 1920, and in the housing schemes carried out between the Wars by the Vienna municipality under Social Democratic control. These improvements gave the young Republic something to be proud of, something, moreover, which was associated with the difficult present rather than with the glorious past, and which directed attention to the possibilities of the future. Another political event of importance was the appeal for financial help made to the Allies by the Christian Socialist Chancellor, Monsignor Seipel, which led to the appointment of the League of Nations Commissioner. He was accused of being a traitor by his opponents, but his action established an important precedent in international collaboration. It showed that it was possible to combine patriotism with the acceptance of international control, an innovation of great significance for a small State like Austria.

In culture and sport the period also brought great success. The triumphs of the Austrian football team, the Vienna State Opera, and the Salzburg Festival stirred the pride and enthusiasm of the harassed Austrian people.

Anton Wildgans' *Rede über Österreich*, which was written in 1929, reflected the development of Austrian patriotism and Austria's sense of identity as a State. This great speech was intended for a foreign audience. But it was also a noble expression of patriotic faith. Its enthusiastic reception in Austria was a clear indication that it summed up ideas that were germinating in many Austrian minds.

Austria's growing self-consciousness and sense of independence were stimulated by Hitler's rise to power. Austrian Socialists had been in favour of union with a Germany in which Socialism and democracy were strong, but they had no

island in a sea of green. Vis-à-vis lies the lovely belt of the Wienerwald. Directly to the rear the low-built biedermeier houses mark out a picturesque pathway to the castle and grounds of Hetzendorf. This again is in the neighbourhood of Laxenburg Castle, with its lake and its game park. 344

The people of Vienna who visit Schönbrunn realise that reforms come not only from below, but sometimes from above, for Joseph II threw open these exclusive grounds to the public of his own accord—Schönbrunn, the Augarten and the Prater.

IN THE PRATER. The Prater was formerly a game preserve for noblemen of high rank, who were furious with the Emperor for deciding that the public in future should have free run of the place: this meant, the aristocrats grumbled, that they could no longer be among their equals. Joseph answered with biting irony: 367

"If I always wished to be among my equals, I should be forced to take my walks in the Kapuzinergruft, among the deceased Hapsburgs."

The Prater is a vast stretch of untouched open country which lies on the right bank of the Danube. Just as the mountains behind the city reach right up to its suburbs, so does the wooded plain of the Prater with its open fields and pools. One can wander for hours in this natural park, the most extensive recreational area for the Viennese. However many tens of thousands come here, the Prater has room for them all as they spread over the broad expanses of meadows and woods which offer shade, rest and repose after the din of the city.

Right through the middle runs the Hauptallee, with the romantic Lusthaus at one end, beyond which the road leads on to the Freudenau, Vienna's racecourse. At all seasons of the year it attracts visitors. But in May this avenue forms an unbroken ribbon of flowering chestnut trees. When the petals fall from the blossoming candelabra, the grass, the footpaths and the roadway are all covered with white and red snow. Later on, in autumn, children eagerly collect the shiny brown chestnuts lying among the dead leaves.

On one side of the Hauptallee lies the little lake near the Konstantinhügel and further on the Heustadel Water, on both of which are rowing boats for hire. On the other side are the Trabrennplatz (Trotting Race Course), the great Sport Stadium, three historically famous coffee houses and the "Wurstelprater" (Fun City). Here at the foot of the Big Wheel, holiday crowds find a centre of light-hearted happiness, where the cares and sorrows of a harsh everyday world may for a space be forgotten. The "Wurstel" (Punch) still delights children as he did in the days of Adalbert Stifter. Fascinated, they sit before the small stage where their imaginations are ever again successfully led astray into a world of illusion and fantasy with very primitive aids—chiefly adroitness of the fingers and a native gift of wit. Ancient wisdom finds its expression here, a wisdom which recognises failings with a smile. Born of

Viennese Girl, 1948.

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Prateraum.

367 the spirit of Baroque, tempered by Biedermeier and handed on by Raimund and Nestroy, popular fancy and humour have here been translated into verse and music. In the "Plane Song" and the "Ashes Song"—and before the "Wurstel" in the Prater—the Viennese recognises his spirit of resignation and is resigned to his recognition of it. Thoughtfully he mingles dream with reality, relieved of something which can be neither assessed nor grasped, and turns back, smiling, to the warm pulsating life, to the fascinating turmoil of the Wurstelprater.

THE BELT OF WOODS AND MEADOWS. The Wienerwald is, to the Viennese, an inviolable and hallowed spot—almost sacrosanct. For this reason it is an unwritten law of city planning that Vienna must never lose its appearance of being part of the countryside. The written law of the great Burgomaster Lueger speaks of the belt of woods and meadows, of its protection and its inviolability.

The belt of woods and meadows, as this deep and extensive green garland of sighing forest and luxuriant meadows is called, encircles a great part of the city, planting outposts deep into its territory, looking over its own shoulder in all directions at it,

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Danube Wharf (Kai).

enlivening and refreshing it day by day with fresh forest winds and cool breezes from the Danube. 367

From the vineyards of Nussdorf rises up the forest-crowned head of the Kahlenberg, favourite mountain of the Viennese and a last outpost of the Wienerwald, the extensive hill country to the north-west of the City. Its fields and deciduous forests form a vast recreational garden of recreation for tired city folk in search of fresh air. Few other cities can boast of such a large and unspoilt natural preserve in the immediate neighbourhood of the granite sea of tenement buildings.

A short walk brings us to the adjacent Leopoldsberg. Here you can sit in the little tavern gardens drinking the excellent wine which is grown a little lower down, near Grinzing and Nussdorf, and gaze at the green domes of Klosterneuburg monastery, the steamers on the Danube with their trailing banners of smoke, the fields along the banks and the Stefansturm which rises like a fountain of stone. One thinks of the days when the merry Babenbergers still held sway here above and pious Margrave Leopold founded the monastery of Klosterneuburg on the spot where he found the wind-tossed veil of his lady.

Downwards from the Leopoldsberg leads a beautiful, shady, wooded path. A visit to the monastery is well worth while, for all our Austrian monasteries have been very important centres of art and learning by virtue of their architecture, their art collections and their libraries; Klosterneuburg enjoys apart from this the best of reputations as a college for church music. The famous school of the town of Klosterneuburg for vine and fruit-growing dates from the times when our monasteries were strictly organised working communities which spread considerable material culture. 792

Plate XVI

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Waldmüller; Prater Trees (section).
Austrian Gallery of the 19th Century.

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